

## The CLEAR Act

Written by Mike Honda  
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In the wake of the Gulf of Mexico's BP oil spill disaster, I and my colleagues in the House acted to protect America's families and businesses, rebuild the Gulf Coast, hold BP and oil companies accountable, and work to ensure that a spill of this kind never happens again. On July 30th, the House passed [the CLEAR Act \(H.R. 3534\)](#) by a [vote of 209-193](#). Not only is this good for our families, our environment, and the health of our natural resources, it will reduce our deficit—saving taxpayers more than \$5 billion in the next five years (

[CBO](#)

), and up to \$50 billion over the next 25 years (

[GAO](#)

).

Here are some of the reasons I voted to pass this important legislation.

- **New Oil Drilling Safety Standards:** Requires all vessels and rigs off U.S. coasts, even foreign owned ones, to fully adhere to new U.S. safety standards and subject to stiffer penalties for safety violations.

- **Eliminating Outdated Liability Limits:** The bill removes the current \$75 million cap on economic damages and ensures that the responsible parties will cover 100 percent of the oil pollution cleanup costs and damages caused by spills they create.

- **Reforming Federal Oversight of Oil Drilling:** Abolishes the scandal-ridden Minerals Management Service (MMS) and divides oversight into three separate entities to eliminate conflicts-of-interest: one to manage leasing & permitting; another to do the policing of health, safety, and environmental regulations; and a third to collect the American people's energy revenues.

- **Strengthening Oil Spill Commission:** Gives teeth to the [President's Commission on the Deepwater Horizon](#) oil spill by giving the Commission subpoena power so they can get the answers they need to understand what actually happened, and report to Congress on recommendations to [ensure effective oversight](#), inspection, monitoring, and response capabilities.

- **Restoring the Gulf & Coastal Communities:** Establishes a [Gulf of Mexico](#)

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### [Restoration Program](#)

to coordinate the efforts to return the Gulf to health following the oil rig explosion. It also works to ensure that fees from offshore drilling go toward protecting and improving our oceans.

- **Royalty Reform for Drilling on Public Lands:** Closes royalty loopholes that allow oil companies to drill for free on public lands during times of high oil prices due to a flawed Republican energy bill in 1995. Taxpayers for Common Sense urged Congress to pass the CLEAR Act and stop the \$50 billion giveaway to the oil and gas industry.

- **Land and Water Conservation Fund:** Ensures that money obtained from the sale of the public's resources be used to protect and conserve our natural, historical, and recreational resources by providing mandatory full funding for the

### [Land and Water Conservation Fund \(LWCF\)](#)

and the

### [Historic Preservation Fund \(HPF\)](#)

. This is about a commitment to offset some of the destructive effects of oil and gas production by preserving places with high quality recreation opportunities and vital wildlife habitat.

[Learn more from the Natural Resources Committee»](#)

[Clear facts about the CLEAR Act»](#)